REMARKS

Claims 1, 2, 4-9, 11-21, and 23- 36 are pending. Claims 1, 14, 26, 29 and 33 are independent. Favorable reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 101

The Examiner rejected claims 1, 2, 4-9, 11-21, and 23- 28 under 35 U.S.C. 101 as being directed to non-statutory subject matter because, according to the Examiner on page 2 of the Office Action, "[t]he presently rejected claims fail to disclose statutory form."

Claim 1 has been amended to clarify that the process is computer-implemented, that the first and second link weighting processes are performed by one or more processors, and that the first and second arrays are stored in memory.

Applicants submit that because claim 1 requires the process to be implemented by a computer and recites elements of a computer which execute various functions of the claimed process, claim 1 recites statutory subject matter under 35 U.S.C. 101. Although the MPEP § 2106.01 recognizes that computer-implemented processes (e.g., computer programs) per se may not be statutory subject matter, it also states that claims to a computer program in which structural and functional interrelationships between the computer program and other claimed elements of a computer permit the computer program's functionality to be realized are statutory:

> Similarly, computer programs claimed as computer listings per se, i.e., the descriptions or expressions of the programs, are not physical "things." They are neither computer components nor statutory processes, as they are not "acts" being performed. Such claimed computer programs do not define any structural and functional interrelationships between the computer program and other claimed elements of a computer which permit the computer program's

> functionality to be realized. In contrast, a claimed computer-readable medium encoded with a computer program is a computer element which defines structural and functional interrelationships between the computer program and the rest of the computer which permit the computer program's functionality to be realized, and is thus statutory. See *Lowry, 32 F.3d at 1583-84, 32 USPQ2d at 1035*. [MPEP § 2106.01]

Accordingly, Applicants submit that claim 1 provides sufficient structural and functional relationships between the computer-implemented process and components of the computer (e.g., one or more processors and memory) to permit the process to be realized, and is thus statutory.

Independent claims 14, 26, 29, and 33 recite similar limitations of claim 1, and are thus statutory for at least the foregoing reasons. Accordingly, Applicants submit that the subject matter of claims 1, 2, 4-9, 11-21, and 23- 28 is statutory and respectfully request that the 101 rejections based on non-statutory subject matter be withdrawn.

The Examiner rejected claims 1, 2, 4-9, 11-21, and 23- 36 under 35 U.S.C. 101 for

(1) "lack[ing] patentable utility," and

(2) "fail[ing] to produce a tangible result."

In response to statement (1), Applicants submit that the claims indeed have patentable utility, namely the method of claim 1 enables an application (e.g., a search engine) to rank the relevance of a link between a first internet object (e.g., a query Q2) and a second Internet object (e.g., a document D1) even if the first and second Internet objects are not directly related and/or there is no information available concerning the relevance of second Internet object in relation to the first Internet object (see Applicant's specification at page 9, lines 12-24). The strength of the inferred relation determined in claim 1 represents the relevance of the link between the Internet objects. Based on the strength of the inferred relation, the application arranges the second object

in a group of search results returned to a user. For example, as described in Applicant's specification at page 7, lines 7-9, when a search engine provides a list of search results in response to query being entered into the search engine, the individual entries in list are ordered or arranged in the list according to their perceived level of relevance.

Applicant's specification on page 5, lines 17-21, describes further useful purposes of the method recited in claim 1:

> One or more advantages can be provided from the above. The existing schemes of searching for information on the Internet are combined to deliver more robust results. Relationships can be determined between Internet objects that are not directly linked. Non-existent links between Internet objects can be inferred as a result of examining these relationships. Further, during the process, the strength of existing relations can be revised.

Claim 1 clearly possesses a specific and substantial utility, namely determining a strength of an inferred relation between a first Internet object and a second Internet object and arranging the second object within a group of returned Internet objects according to the strength of the inferred relation.

With regard to statement (2), Applicants submit that claim 1 indeed produces a tangible result, namely the method of claim 1 returns a group of Internet objects associated with the first Internet object where the group includes the second Internet object arranged according to the strength of the inferred relation. According to MPEP § 2106, "the tangible requirement does require that the claim must recite more than a 35 U.S.C. 101 judicial exception, in that the process claim must set forth a practical application of that judicial exception to produce a real-world result."

As discussed above with respect to statement (1), the method of claim 1 enables an application (e.g., a search engine) to quantify the relevance of a link between a first Internet object (e.g., a query Q2) and a second Internet object (e.g., a document D1) by determining the strength of an inferred relation between a first Internet object and a second Internet object. The first and second Internet objects may not be directly related and/or there may be no information available concerning the relevance of second Internet object in relation to the first Internet object. The strength of the inferred relation is used to arrange the second Internet object within a group of returned Internet objects that are associated with the first Internet object. Such an arrangement indicates the relevance of the second Internet Object with respect to the other Internet objects of the group. Thus, the returned group of Internet objects, in which the second Internet object is arranged according to the strength of the inferred relation, constitutes a practical, real-world (i.e., tangible) result. For at least the foregoing reasons, Applicants submit that claim 1 possesses patentable utility and produces a tangible result.

Prior Art Rejections from previous Office Action of May 16, 2006

Applicants note that the current Office Action does not contain any rejections based on prior art. All of the rejections of the Office Action are based on 35 U.S.C. § 101. The Office Action also does not include any substantive response to Applicants' amendments and arguments submitted in response to the art rejections of the previous Office Action of May 16, 2006. Although, the Examiner states on page 2 of the Office Action, that "Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1-36 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of

rejection," the Examiner has not provided any showing that the new grounds of rejection (i.e., the 101 rejections) were necessitated by Applicant's previous claim amendments and arguments. Therefore, Applicant is at a loss to understand how the 101 rejections render the Applicant's previous arguments to the prior art rejections moot. In view of the absence of any art rejection, Applicants assume that the Examiner considers the claims to distinguish over the prior art. Accordingly, Applicants submit that claim 1 is allowable.

Amended independent claims 14, 26, 29 and 33 include limitations that are similar to those described above with respect to claim 1. These claims are also believed to be allowable for at least the same reasons noted above.

Each of the dependent claims is also believed to define patentable features of the invention. Each dependent claim partakes of the novelty of its corresponding independent claim and, as such, has not been addressed specifically herein.

It is believed that all of the pending claims have been addressed. However, the absence of a reply to a specific rejection, issue or comment does not signify agreement with or concession of that rejection, issue or comment. In addition, because the arguments made above may not be exhaustive, there may be reasons for patentability of any or all pending claims (or other claims) that have not been expressed. Finally, nothing in this paper should be construed as an intent to concede any issue with regard to any claim, except as specifically stated in this paper, and the amendment of any claim does not necessarily signify concession of unpatentability of the claim prior to its amendment.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully submit that the application is in condition for allowance, and such action is respectfully requested at the Examiner's earliest convenience.

Applicants' undersigned attorney can be reached at the address shown below. All telephone calls should be directed to the undersigned at 617-521-7896.

Enclosed is a one-month Petition for Extension of Time Fee. Please apply any charge deficiencies or credits to Deposit Account No. 06 1050, referencing Attorney Docket No. 19084-540001.

Respectfully submitted,

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